

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 291445Z MAR 75 ZFF-4  
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 734  
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY SANAA  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T JIDDA 2243

EXDIS

STADIS////////////////////

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1  
TAGS: PFOR, SA, XF, PINT  
SUBJECT: RUMORS OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN FAISAL'S ASSASSINATION

REFS: A. JIDDA 2207 B. AMMAN 2026 C. WHITE HOUSE PGESS  
CONFERENCE OF MARCH 28

1. DURING A MEETING WITH ACTING MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MOHAMMED MAS'UD MARCH 29, MAS'UD TOLD  
ME HE WAS CONCERNED BY RUMORS THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS BEHIND  
THE ASSASSINATION OF KING FAISAL, OR IN SOME WAY HAD BEEN  
INVOLVED WITH IT. HE SAID THAT HE HIMSELF DID NOT OF  
COURSE BELIEVE SUCH A STORY FOR AN INSTANT, BUT NOTED  
IT WAS BEING PURVEYED BY COMMUNIST NEWS MEDIA, THAT  
BBC WAS GIVING NOTICABLE AIR TIME TO REPORTING THESE  
SOVIET ACCUSATIONS, AND THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF

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INVOLVEMENT HAD EVEN BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE COUNCIL

OF MINISTERS. IN THIS LATTER CONNECTION, MAS'UD SAID THERE HAD BEEN SOME COMMENTS THAT THE ASSASSIN HAD STUDIED AND TRAVELED IN THE UNITED STATES, AND THAT BY RECENT ACCOUNTS THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HAS SOMETIMES BEEN INVOLVED IN PLOTS TO LIQUIDATE EVEN THE CHIEFS OF CERTAIN PRO-AMERICAN STATES.

2. I REPLIED THAT I HOPED MAS'UD WOULD COMMUNICATE WHAT I WAS ABOUT TO SAY TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF HIS GOVERNMENT. IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE THAT ANY RATIONAL PERSON FOR A MOMENT COULD BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT COULD HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN TUESDAY'S TRAGIC EVENTS IN RIYADH. A DENIAL OF THIS RUMOR HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE BY THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SPOKESMAN MR. NESSEN ON MARCH 28 (REF C). THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR AGENTS BY A DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN WOULD BE HAPPY TO TRY TO WEAKEN THE CLOSE, COOPERATIVE TIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THE FIRST DAYS OF KING KHALED'S REGIME. IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY FOR BOTH SIDES IF SUCH MALICIOUS AND UNFOUNDED RUMORS WON ANY ATTENTION OR CREDIBILITY. I TOLD MAS'UD I HAD ABRUPTLY--EVEN RUDELY--DISMISSED A QUESTION I HAD HEARD FROM A NEWSMAN ALONG THESE LINES, AND HAD INSTRUCTED THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. OFFICIAL COMMUNITY TO RESPOND IN A SIMILAR FASHION IF THE ISSUE EVER AROSE WITH ONE OF THEM. KING FAISAL'S BROTHER-IN-LAW KAMAL ADHAM HAD ALSO BEEN THE KINGDOM'S CHIEF INTELLIGENCE ADVISOR; I TRUSTED THAT HE WOULD SEE TO IT THAT ALL ASPECTS OF THE ASSASSINATION WERE CAREFULLY EXAMINED.

3. RECALLING OUR OWN TRAGIC LOSS OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY, I URGED THAT THE SAG NOT BE TAKEN IN BY RUMORS WHICH UNBALANCED PERSONALITIES WERE WONT TO SPREAD AT SUCH TIMES. I SAID FINALLY THAT I EXPECTED TO HEAR NO MORE OF SUCH STORIES BUT WOULD SINCERELY APPRECIATE MAS'UD'S CONVEYING TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MY STRONG, OFFICIAL VIEWS ON THIS MATTER. MAS'UD APPEARED RELIEVED, AND SAID HE WOULD DO SO.

4. COMMENT: I EXPECT TO SEE FA D AND SULTAN IN THE  
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NEXT FEW DAYS, BUT DO NOT THINK I SHOULD DIGNIFY THE RUMORS TO WHICH MAS'UD REFERRED BY INITIATING DISCUSSION ON THEM FURTHER.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: FOR DHAHRAN: SHOULD IT BE RAISED WITH YOU THAT THE U.S. MIGHT HAVE HAD SOME ROLE IN KING FAISAL'S ASSASSINATION, THE IMPUTATION SHOULD BE DENIED WITH REFERENCE TO THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS INTERVIEW, AND

MY OWN COMMENTS TO MAS'UD. SHOULD A QUESTIONER PERSIST  
IN THIS LINE OF APPROACH, I WOULD RECOMMEND THE QUESTION  
BE DISMISSED WITH INDIGNATION.

FOR LONDON: HAVE THE BBC'S BROADCASTS WHICH REPORTED  
SOVIET ACCUSATIONS OF OUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ASSASSINATION  
ALWAYS MADE IT CLEAR THEY WERE QUOTING SOVIET SOURCES?  
ALSO, DOES IT APPEAR AS IF LONDON IS GIVING DISPROPORTIONATE  
COVERAGE TO THESE ACCUSATIONS? (ARAB AUDIENCES WOULD FIND  
THE VOLUME AND BALANCE OF BBC'S REPORTING IMPLICITLY SIGNIFICANT,  
EVEN IF IN EACH CASE THE RUSSIAN SOURCE OF AN UNFRIENDLY  
REPORT OR INTERPRETATION WAS CITED.)  
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## Message Attributes

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